

Message Text

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42

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 EB-03 OES-02 INR-05

CIAE-00 L-01 /037 W

----- 053845

R 171055Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3379

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 3847

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN EG

SUBJECT: ESSO EXPLORATION IN RED SEA

REF: STATE 53990

1. ESSO EGYPT MANAGER STANLEY INFORMED US APRIL 15 THAT DESPITE ASSURANCES FROM MINISTER HILAL AND EGPC THAT CANAL TRANSIT FOR SEIZMIC VESSEL WOULD BE POSSIBLE, HE HAD DECIDED TO BRING ANOTHER RIG AROUND AFRICA WHICH WILL ARRIVE IN SAFAGA ON MAY 7. MAIN REASON FOR THIS DECISION IS COMPLICATED GOE BUREAUCRATIC PROCESS FOR BRINGING VESSEL INTO PORT AND FOR OBTAINING NECESSARY CUSTOMS AND SECURITY CLEARANCES. SHIP WHICH WILL BE USED IS ONE WHICH DID WORK FOR DEMINEX IN EGYPT LAST DECEMBER. IT HAS ALREADY BEEN CLEARED THROUGH CUSTOMS AND CREW IS FAMILIAR TO EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES. TIME ALSO A FACTOR, AS PREVIOUS SHIP SUSTAINED SOME DAMAGE IN ACCIDENT AND IT LIKELY THAT EVEN GIVEN CANAL TRANSIT IT COULD NOT REACH RED SEA CONCESSION BEFORE JUNE 12 DEADLINE WHEN SEISMIC WORK MUST BE STARTED UNDER ESSO/GOE EXPLORATION AGREEMENT.

2. STANLEY ALSO RAISED PROBLEM OF SEISMIC WORK IN WATERS WHICH ISRAEL MIGHT CONSIDER SENSITIVE. ESSO RED SEA CONCESSION IS IRREGULAR QUADRANGLE AS DESCRIBED REFTTEL.
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ONLY PROBLEM WILL BE SEISMIC WORK OFF OF RAS MUHAMMAD.

STANLEY SAID THAT HE HAS NOT YET DISCUSSED MATTER WITH THE
EGYPTIANS. STANLEY AWARE OF AMOCO EXPERIENCE (CAIRO 1532
AND PREVIOUS) AND FACT THAT ISRAELIS, IN DEALING WITH AMOCO,
NEVER SET ANY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES ABOUT APPROACH TO SINAI.
HE THOUGH AREA WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE LAST SECTION OF CONCESSION
TO BE SURVEYED, HOWEVER. STANLEY NOT AWARE DEPT/ESSO
MIDDLE EAST DISCUSSIONS.
MAESTRONE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, EXPLORATION, OFFSHORE DRILLING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CAIRO03847
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750135-0013
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750439/aaaabkgv.tel
Line Count: 69
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 STATE 53990
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 AUG 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <28 NOV 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ESSO EXPLORATION IN RED SEA
TAGS: EGEN, EG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006